REMARKS

Claims 9-16 are pending of which claims 9, 11, 13, and 15 are independent. In this Amendment, claims 9, 11, 13 and 15 have been amended to clarify an aspect of the invention. Support is found in, for example, paragraphs [0070] and [0075]-[0078] of the application-as-published. Care has been exercised not to introduce new matter.

Rejections of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the claim language "without making a substantial change in appearance of the icon image" in claims 13 and 15 was indicated to be indefinite. In response, the claim language in claims 13 and 15 has been eliminated. Therefore, the rejections is rendered moot.

Rejections of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 9-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mendori et al., (International Conference on Computer Education-ICCE' 2002, hereinafter "Mendori"), in view of Duroj et al., (U.S. Patent No. 6,804,702) hereinafter "Duroj"). The rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Amended claim 9, in pertinent part, recites "determining whether start information necessary for initiating a session for a user is embedded in a plurality of predetermined places uniquely associated with the user within the icon image, the start information being additional information different from the icon image pixels making up the original icon image."

The proposed combination of Mendori and Duroj fails to disclose the limitations of claim 9.

As the Examiner admitted on page 4 of the Office Action, Mendori fails to disclose "start information …is embedded in a plurality of predetermined places uniquely associated with the user within the icon image," and "the start information being additional information different from the icon image pixels making up the original icon image." Turning to Duroj, the icon pixels, themselves, serves as a user ID and password. The pixels that make up the drop and drag icon are compared to stored pixels to determine permission of access to a virtual hard disc. The comparison is based on the closeness(match) between the pixels making up the drop and drag and stored pixels. (See column 3, lines 44-55) Duroj' drop and drag icon, however, does not have start information different from the icon image pixels which is uniquely associated with the user for initiation of a session. In contrast, claim 9 requires the "start information" to be "embedded in a plurality of predetermined places uniquely associated with the user within the icon image," and "the start information" to be "additional information different from the icon image pixels making up the original icon image."

Since "start information" which is "additional information different from the icon image pixels making up the original icon image," is "embedded in a plurality of predetermined places uniquely associated with the user within the icon image," a plurality of users can select and use the same icon image. While the plurality of users uses the same icon image, each of the plurality of users can be identified based on each of the unique start information imbedded in the icon image for each user. In contrast, both of Mendori and Duroj requires a plurality of user to use their own icon images different from other users' and, thus, the plurality of users cannot use the same icon image.

Amended independent claims 11, 13 and 15 include the same or substantially similar limitations of claim 9.

Accordingly, as each and every limitation must be disclosed or suggested by the cited prior art references in order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness (*see*, M.P.E.P. § 2143.03) and for at least the foregoing reasons proposed combination of Mendori and Duroj fails to do so, it is respectfully submitted claims 9, 11, 13 and 15 and claims dependent thereupon are patentable over the combination of Mendori and Duroj.

Conclusion

Upon entry of the above claim amendments, claims 9-16 remain active in this application. Applicant submits that all of the claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, this case should now be ready to pass to issue; and Applicant respectfully requests a prompt favorable reconsideration of this matter.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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